

following remarks. No amendments to the claims are made with this submission. Claims 2-11 remain in the case.

A petition and fee for an appropriate extension of time is attached hereto along with payment thereof.

The indication of allowable subject matter for claim 3 and the objection to claim 6 is noted and appreciated.

1. Submission and acceptance of the RCE is noted.

2-3. The recitation of 35 USC 102 (b) is noted and the rejection of claim 2 thereunder as anticipated by Kehl '497.

Claim 2 in part recites,

"providing an inner arc of each of said plurality of tines that includes a radius that is less than the radius of a pin that said contact is adapted to mate with and wherein a chord across said inner arc is disposed on a same side of said at least one of said plurality of tines as is said pin" [Emphasis added]

Careful review of the Examiner's attachment of Kehl shows the pins as having a radius that is the same as the pin. There is no teaching or suggestion by Kehl that the tines include a radius that is less than the radius of the pin, as is presently claimed.

The Examiner has shown, in red, that the chord is on the same side as the pin. This is agreed. However, instant claim 2 includes the additional limitation of the tines having a radius that is less than that of the pin. Therefore, claim 2 includes an element not anticipated by Kehl, or any of the other cited references.

The Examiner provided only one page of Kehl's patent. If there is support for the Examiner's position that Kehl anticipates the invention, as claimed, please provide that support (regarding the tine radius vs. pin radius) and please indicate how anticipation is believed to occur.

The applicant and undersigned believe the invention as claimed overcomes all of the cited prior art references and is well believed to be in condition of allowance, as presently written. Reconsideration of claim 2 is therefore respectfully requested.

4-6. The recitation of 35 USC 103 is noted and the rejections as applied to claims 4, 7-11 (over Kehl) and claims 5 and 11 in further view of Kerek.

The Examiner asserts that Kehl discloses a tine with an inside arc that has a radius less than the radius of the pin. Clearly, there is no teaching to this effect. The drawing shows the tines as having a radius (the **curvature inside the tine**) as corresponding with that of the pin.

This is not about what happens to the tine when the pin enters. Of course the tine is pushed away, but all prior contact theory has presupposed that maximum area of contact intermediate the inside of the tine (once it has been pushed away by the pin) and that of the outside of the pin is desired. To achieve maximum contact, the interior of the tine must have a radius that matches that of the pin. Then, when together, the two (inside curvature of tine, outside curvature of pin) bear against each other with maximum contact area.

The instant invention claims the tines as having a smaller radius than that of the pin. This ensures that the tine only makes contact with the pin, once the pin is inserted into the contact, along the **two outer edges** of the

tine (because the center of the tine, having a smaller radius, is raised above the pin intermediate the two outer edges or ends of the tine).

The radius of the tine is not the distance the tine is disposed from a center of the contact, as the Examiner appears to be interpreting the claim. The distance the tine is away from the center of the contact is a **variable** that depends on the "**set**" of the tine (that is, how much the tine angles inward toward the center of the contact when the pin is absent). That dimension is the variable distance that the tine is from a longitudinal center of the contact. It has nothing to do with the actual, physical radius of the tine.

The radius referred in the claims is the radius that is **cut into the inside of the tine**. That radius is a **true** radius and it **does not change** depending on how close the tine is to the center of the contact or how far away from the center of the contact the tine is because the **radius** is **machined into the tine**.

Accordingly, the instant invention, as claimed, includes an element absent all known contacts, that is when the tine includes a radius that is less than that of the

pin. This element would also be absent from all of the cited combinations.

This is a most substantive difference because it provides all of the benefits the entire specification discloses, namely that a smaller tine radius results in *lines of contact only occurring at the ends [outer edges] of the tines*. This *teaches away* from all known contact theory, especially high current contact theory.

Accordingly, the rejections applied to remaining claims 4-11 are believed to be well overcome and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

7. Claim 3 was allowed. Thank you.

8. Claim 6 was objected to. The REMARKS are believed to show how claim 6 which includes the limitations of base claim 4, element (c) [i.e., the tines having a smaller radius than the pin) already well differentiate apart from the prior art and is already in condition of allowance. Therefore, no further amendments to the claims are believed to be necessary in order to bring the claims into condition of allowance. The prior art of record also fails to teach tines with a smaller radius than that of the pin. Thank you.

As all remaining claims 2-11 are believed to be in condition of allowance, reconsideration of all matters is respectfully requested and a notice of allowance is courteously requested as soon as possible.

It is noted that the correspondence address was not updated after the last amendment and RCE was submitted nor was it updated after the previous amendment was submitted. If the Examiner is unable to correct the correspondence address, please contact the undersigned by telephone prior to mailing a response in order to avoid a possible loss of correspondence in the mail. Please correct the correspondence address and direct all future correspondence to the correspondence address and telephone as shown below. If the Examiner requires any additional submission to effect a change in address please contact the undersigned via the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

 Feb 10, 2004

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